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THE MEO -- AN INCIPIENT CHURCH

G. Linwood Barney

Of the 45,000 Meo in the area around Xieng Khouang Province, in Laos (Indochina), about 4,500 have become professing Christians since May 1950. During this same period, about 1,500 Khmu, a neighboring group of different culture, have also accepted Christianity. They had heard of it, but never in a comprehensive manner. How has Christianity spread as an innovation in Meo culture?

The Meo people of Xieng Khouang represent part of the great numbers who have drifted southward from China, where they are known as Miao, into Northern Indochina and Thailand. Roux, who has followed their development for four decades, feels that the trail of their "slash and burn" clearings and other changes that they have wrought in the land would indicate that they first entered Indochina about 120 to 140 years ago.¹ This would give credence to the statements of my informants that their ancestors first entered Xieng Khouang Province about a century ago. They located, as is their custom, in the highlands and on mountain peaks, where the elevation runs from 4,000 to 8,000 feet. The Meo still show their influence from China by many loan words from Chinese.

Protestant missions had been in operation in Laos for about fifteen years when the first missionaries entered Xieng Khouang in 1940. The ministry of these new missionaries was abruptly interrupted by World War II. At the initial entry, little or no contact was made with the general Meo population, which was seldom to be seen in town. It was not until late 1949 that a young missionary couple again took up residence in Xieng Khouang and began a study of the Lao language, the language of the culturally dominant group and of government in Laos. Catholic missionaries had had some contact with the Meo, with little if any response.

Xieng Khouang town, population about 1,500, is the administrative center for the province and serves as the

home of Tubi, the highest Meo official in all Laos. Tubi is appointed by the federal government to be representative for the Meo population of Laos to the Laotian government.

We will use May 1950 as the time of initial contact between the Meo and Christianity. As background for understanding this innovation we give a description of the cultural setting at the time of contact. This description is limited to those factors which are relevant to the introduction of Christianity. Then an account of the introduction and early dissemination of Christianity is given. In this connection we shall see the early beginnings of church development until the time of the evacuation of the missionaries because of Viet Minh (Communist) war action in 1953. Next, the church as it existed after eighteen months of Communist occupation is described and its further development during the next twelve months indicated. Finally, I shall attempt to interpret this data in the light of anthropological theory, with anticipated developments for the future.

Meo Culture at the Time of Contact - May 1950

Rice is the basic food staple for the Meo, although corn is grown and used when necessary. The Meo are the only people in the whole area to grind corn in rotating stone corn mills. They are famous for their horses, which are usually somewhat larger than the typical horse in Southeast Asia. They are proud of the animals, care for them fondly, train them well, and produce a beast of burden who's sure-footedness and stamina on the steep rugged trails is amazing. Cattle, goats, pigs, chickens, and dogs make up the remainder of the livestock common in a Meo village.

A village may number from one large household (I visited one with thirty-five members) to a village with as many as forty households. Usually a household consists of the conjugal family with occasional additional elderly members or a married son who remains temporarily until his own house is built.

The clans are exogamous, and usually several clans will be represented in one village. Polygyny is practiced, usually as a result of levirate marriage. One case of sororal polygyny was observed. Wealthier men, like Tubi, may have several wives, but the "big wife" is considered most important and accompanies him at public functions. Trial marriage, a normal practice, is carried on with a semblance of disapproval by the girls' parents. Marriage is contracted through intermediaries but is not actualized until the young man has earned and paid the agreed bride-price. Thus girls may get married soon after puberty, but men are often eighteen to twenty years old before they have sufficient funds to meet the contract price.

Every Meo household has an opium poppy field. This provides the cash income. French administrators declared that an estimated sixty to seventy per cent of the Meo adult male population had been addicted to the opium habit. The women seldom use it except in severe illness and suffering. Boys may be introduced to it, but their frequent use of it is frowned upon until after marriage.

The village chief is the most powerful political figure in a village and, although not commonly a dictator, he is highly respected; when he gives an explicit command it is obeyed. His house is usually large enough to accommodate the entire village when a meeting is called.

The shaman, who probably holds an ascribed status below that of the chief, is considered necessary in any Meo village. Indeed, many villages have any number of them. Their duties take much of their time, and they are reimbursed considerably. The shaman and the chief seem to operate in different phases of life and thus have little cause for conflict. The shaman is expected to serve the people. Some of his functions are: 1) protecting the newborn child from the evil spirits by placing fetish bands on his neck and limbs; 2) performing rituals at funeral and marriage ceremonies and reciting

long dirges at the former; 3) securing protection for a rice field at planting time; 4) securing protection for trail and hunting expeditions; and 5) performing extensive rituals for the sick, including the sacrificing of some chicken or animal offered by the family of the sick person.

The Meo culture is rich in folklore which is handed down in couplet form and may be recited for days. The folklore and present day practices reflect their deep belief in a spirit world. They believe in a supreme deity, Fua-Tai, who created everything but who has become disinterested in mankind. The Meo are left at the mercy of the evil spirits who make constant demands on them for offerings and sacrifices. They even set up the specifications for the homes, requiring them to be made of hand-hewn boards in vertical position. Board shingles form the roof. A central part of the house contains an altar for the evil spirits.

Another factor which has bearing on the subject of this paper is the relationship between the Meo and another tribal people, the Khmu. The latter live in the foothills and have adopted much of the Laotian culture, but are animistic much like the Meo. Their relationship with the Meo is one of mutual respect with no marked friendship or hostility

Patterns of Culture Change

In the ten years that had passed since the brief stay of missionaries in Xieng Khouang before World War II and the re-entry of new missionaries in 1949, circumstances had changed. Trends of culture change were evident among the Meo. Reasons are only speculative. Perhaps newer generations were breaking from older traditions due to the migrations. Perhaps Japanese control had given temporary equal status to Meo and Lao alike. Perhaps the inherent qualities of the Meo, their aggressiveness, alertness, inquisitiveness, etc., built up until internal combustion revealed itself in an external manner.

Today the Meo descend in large numbers upon the market. They have little produce to trade, but they make their many purchases with opium and silver. Seldom will the Meo offer or accept any form of paper currency from anyone. The Meo who, ten years before, were seldom seen in town now not only attend market but occasionally take up residence near town and obtain employment there. Many Meo youth, with Tubi's encouragement, have enrolled in the town school, where they acquire the equivalent of an eighth-grade education. Few actually remain in school for more than a couple of years, but some have completed this schooling and are now in attendance in the lycée at Vientiane, and one Meo, a Christian, is in college in Saigon.

Meanwhile, in some Meo villages, education is considered a real attainment and some Laotians have been paid wages above that of the Laotian school to open schools in the Meo villages for the local youth. Such schools are rather "hit and miss," but they have helped toward some literacy. The mission records show that maybe three to four per cent of the Meo are literate. This percentage would increase with closer proximity to town. Learning Laotian is considered by the Meo as a necessary evil in order to gain prestige and advancement. (Many are now obtaining semiofficial positions with the government.) Already the Laotian, who has dominated the economic and political scene, senses the rising tide of the Meo society. Regardless of what may have triggered these new developments in the Meo culture, they must be considered along with the more static cultural traits described above as part of the overall setting into which Christianity was introduced. Certain elements were conducive to its acceptance, while others were in direct opposition to it.

Introduction of Christianity

In May of 1950 the missionary family residing in Xieng Khouang left to attend a conference of missionaries in Vietnam. A young Khmu tribesman from the province of Luang Prabang came to the mission station to

watch the property and also to let the local population realize that the missionary had left only temporarily. This young man, Nai Kheng, went about town telling of his Christian faith. One who listened intently was Po Si, an old Meo shaman who lived close to town. He stated that a female shaman had prophesied two years before that in two years someone would come to tell them about the true God, Fua-Tai. Po Si was convinced that Nai Kheng was telling him about the same God and became a professing Christian. He took Nai Kheng to his own village, where the chief led his entire group in expressing faith in Fua-Tai-Yesu, as Jesus came to be called in Meo. Kheng was then taken to the village of the female shaman who had made the prediction mentioned above. After listening to Nai Kheng's message, she stated firmly that she was convinced that this was the one of whom she had spoken, and she led her village in placing faith in Fua-Tai-Yesu.

With this, other villages in the area sent for Nai Kheng, who traveled almost constantly relating the simple events of Christ's life and the means of salvation through faith in Him. After being delayed weeks by a typhoon, the missionary returned and was amazed to find nearly 1,000 Meo tribespeople who had announced their faith in Christ.

The missionary then accompanied Nai Kheng and Po Si to the villages of the new Christians where, by request of some and consent of others, he removed and destroyed all fetishes from their bodies, homes, fields, etc. This became an expected ritual on the part of any new convert. The Christians refer very frequently to their freedom from the evil spirits, explaining that the evil spirit, Tlan, is more powerful than man but less powerful than Fua-Tai, who through His Son, Yesu, has again become intensely interested in man and thus liberates him from the power and effects of the evil spirits. This faith in Fua-Tai-Yesu is very real, as is evidenced by the manner in which the Meo, with no exhortation from the missionary, travel widely in the area telling others about their newly found faith.

At this time another missionary fluent in the Laotian language (no missionary spoke Meo; all communication was carried on through interpreters) came to Xieng Khouang to teach in a hastily formed catechist Bible school. The first session was attended by about thirty-five students. Every village having Christians sent at least one representative who could understand Laotian and who was respected by the members of the village. Some of these had had one to six years in the public school.

Church services were conducted in Xieng Khouang at one o'clock every Sunday afternoon and were attended by 200 to 300 people. A temporary structure of bamboo and thatch was erected for these services.

Beginning Linguistic Analysis

In 1951 my family and I arrived in Xieng Khouang to undertake the reduction of the Meo language to writing. I used the monolingual approach and gradually learned not only the language but many of the underlying facets of the Meo culture. In early 1952 the other missionaries left for furlough and I was left in charge of the work. Sharing the responsibility was Pastor Sali, an ordained Laotian clergyman (actually Lao and Vietnamese descent), who quickly picked up a practical knowledge of Meo and was a great help in establishing the church. All missionary-national communication was carried on in Meo. Only the Bible school, now taught by Sali, continued in Laotian, and this because of a ruling by the federal government.

Almost exclusive use of the Meo language broke down barriers and brought to light Meo practices which were in contradiction to American Christianity and some which seemed to oppose the Judeo-Christian tradition everywhere. However, the main concern at this stage was to establish the Meo in the Christian Faith, which in its essential element is a God-man relationship apart from cultural factors of any particular culture.

Just prior to my arrival in Xieng Khouang, another event of great importance took place. Tubi, the Meo leader, became intensely interested in Christianity and attended the services regularly with his family. He called the missionary and the catechists to his home and stated his intention of having a Christian home. He did not wish to go on record as having become a Christian himself because of the Buddhist government, but his entire family, including his several wives and all the children, expressed their faith, and Tubi requested that all fetishes be destroyed. His principal wife has been a faithful adherent and supporter of the local church and was in the first group to be baptized. This led to even greater receptiveness among the Meo population and was directly responsible for the conversion of a Meo district chief, Sai Pao, who is responsible for many villages and has himself been instrumental in guiding a large number of those under him into the Christian Faith.

Like the expanding ripples caused by a stone thrown into water, the dissemination of Christianity began to spread out from Xieng Khouang and continues today. By March of 1953, about 2,000 Meo and 1,000 Khmu had become Christians. One could travel about four days from Xieng Khouang before he reached the periphery of the movement.

At this juncture, the Viet Minh Communists struck from across the border. Xieng Khouang was one of the first places to fall into Red hands. No time was allowed for preparing the national for the sudden forced departure of the missionaries and Sali. Left behind were fourteen catechists who had had training for about two years and six others who had received training for six months. It must be noted that there were also several strong lay Christian leaders who were very earnest in their Christian conduct and witness.

Upon my departure, I was greatly disturbed about the future of this young church, fearing that it was not too well established, wondering whether I should have put

pressure on the Christians to lead more "separated" lives, and questioning the real stability of the faith of the Meo.

Before moving to a description of the situation eighteen months later, when missionaries could again make residence in Xieng Khouang, I should like to recount three personal experiences which illustrate developments in the thinking of the Meo. Each of these situations arose spontaneously, although one might legitimately ask, "Did these concepts arise within these individuals, or did they result from their associations with the missionaries?" It would be nice to think that the former was the case.

The Marriage Ceremony

Tua Pao, a twenty-year-old catechist, was engaged to be married. He had paid the bride-price and approached me as to the manner in which he should get married, since he did not wish to follow the traditional form completely. After discussion, elements of the Meo culture which were not related to the evil spirits were retained and a simple Christian ritual was added to produce an over-all ceremony which the Meo have followed with enthusiasm. In substance the entire procedure includes the usual overtures to the girl's parents by an intermediary of the young man, an agreed amount of bride-price, reciprocal feasts by both families, and then the brief ceremony at the bride's home when neck bands are exchanged and a local pastor or catechist asks God's seal of blessing on this new home. Then the couple go to live in the young man's village. Tua Pao's wedding was the first Christian Meo wedding, but many others have followed.

Trial Marriage

Ntrua, an informant sixteen years old, raised the question of trial marriage. He had been a Christian for two years. Now he was approaching the age when young men practiced trial marriage. The Meo parents offer only a semblance of disapproval when the young man spends

the night with their daughter. Actually she is allowed to sleep on a platform apart from the rest of the family and the young male intruder is expected to come and go surreptitiously between the time that the family retires and arises. This may continue for some time until the young couple decide that they do or do not wish to become recognized by their communities as husband and wife. If they want to get married, then the procedure is to have a mediary arrange bride-price and other formalities. If they do not wish to continue, then each looks elsewhere for another partner. Apparently the Meo have frowned upon a repeated change of partners, considering this to be immoral and not for the real purpose of securing a wife. Ntrua questioned the practice in either form for the Christian. I discussed the problem with him without making any ruling. Ntrua drew his own conclusion that he could better follow Christ by not following this practice. He is today quite influential in encouraging other youths to do the same.

Opium as a Source of Income

A Meo tribesman of about forty years of age who had achieved wealth according to Meo standards approached me. He had sufficient rice fields to keep his household but had been very successful in the production of opium. He was not addicted to it himself, but stated that he felt it was improper for a Christian to use opium and therefore questioned whether he should even grow it. He stated that the opium hindered the Meo from working the way he should, eventually made him a "murky" thinker, and kept him in a state of poverty. I discussed other possibilities for cash income. Finally, of his own volition, the man turned to raising market produce instead of opium and reported that he is doing well.

Other cases could be related, but these brief accounts indicate the alert Meo mind, his intense persuasion of the Christian Faith, and perhaps some of the reasons for the content in the next section of this paper.

After the Occupation

On our return, it seemed that everyone had some experience to relate in which his faith had proven effective during the difficult and meager days of the occupation. Space does not permit giving these accounts given me in the fall of 1954. Except for two abbreviated contacts, the Christians had been separated from the missionaries during this entire period of eighteen months. Little was known of the actual conditions. Perhaps a little comparison will give a quick glimpse of what transpired.

In March of 1953, there were about 2,000 Christian Meo living in fifty-six scattered villages which were located from an hour to four days from Xieng Khouang. Ten villages had chapels. Catechists were supported, the mission and the Christians sharing equally. Most of the Christians came to the missionary for advice and counsel. In September of 1954, when I returned, the Meo Christians numbered between 3,000 and 3,500 and seventy-three villages had Christians. They extended to six days' travel from Xieng Khouang. The church had continued without mission funds. There was a matured Christian concept among many of the Christians, as was evidenced by their ability to make decisions concerning the interpretation of Christianity in their own conduct. The catechists were often sought out for counsel. Some of the catechists had not been too effective as leaders but others had developed splendidly. Suffice it to say that both I and the missionary organization I represent were deeply impressed by the strides made by the Christians of Xieng Khouang.

Finally, it should be noted that the movement continues. Latest reports number the Meo Christians over 4,000. These live in some ninety-six villages, with forty-two villages professing to be one hundred per cent Christian.

Organizational developments have also appeared. The Christians in each village select one or two lay leaders as deacons. These men meet the Scriptural standards and have traits that assure the respect of their fellow tribesmen. The Meo are very ethnocentric and have grown to assume Christianity is as much Meo as it is American. Often a village has not expressed an interest in Christianity until its members are convinced that it is not just Western culture.

The school for catechists is taught by a missionary and by Sali, with forty catechists attending. A new development has been short-term schools conducted for the deacons and slanted to help them in discharging effectively their spiritual responsibilities.

Special conferences at Christmas and Easter are attended by groups numbering 1,200 to 1,800.

A national church organization has been formed with an executive board consisting of Sali as president, a catechist as secretary, a group of laymen as keepers of the treasury, and representatives from the Laotian, Meo, and Khmu ethnic groups. The missionary is adviser.

Along with this progress there remain factors which present and will continue to present problems for some time. Some of these have developed from mission programs; others have been a natural development caused by the contact of Meo culture with Christianity; still others are the fault of neither, but the result of circumstances beyond control.

As a natural result of the culture contact there are such issues as follow: 1) the use and production of opium; 2) the practice of polygamy, by choice and by inheritance; 3) the practice of trial marriage; and 4) misconceptions and misinterpretations occurring most commonly at the periphery. For example, at one time a Meo trinity developed with three men representing God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They had quite a following

until Holy Spirit died in trying to fly, as a dove, from a high elevation.

As a result of mission administration some problems have arisen. The time element here has not always been made clear in mission reports, and much improvement has been made, as will be indicated in the next section. Included among these problems are those arising from the following procedures: 1) despite eighteen months of self-support, the mission again became engaged in giving a subsidy to the catechists; 2) the mission has contributed largely to the planning and erection of a permanent church building in Xieng Khouang, and likewise with school buildings; 3) the curriculum and teaching in the Bible school is under mission domination; 4) the church constitution began to be formulated by a committee consisting of three missionaries and only two nationals, both Laotian; 5) allocations and assignments of catechists have been made by the missionaries; 6) the missionaries have performed most of the church ordinances; 7) the missionary handled all funds, both mission and local offerings; and 8) the Christians have had the concept that somehow the missionary had greater influence with God than did the catechists.

The constant threat of renewal of Communist aggression and the soaring inflational trend are further factors that create new problems and add to some of those just listed.

Analysis and Evaluation

Despite many mistakes by commission and omission on the part of the missionaries, I do not feel presumptuous in concluding that Christianity has been well received by the Meo and that the process of acculturation has been much more than a superficial one. A cynic might add, "And this in spite of missionaries."

I should like to attempt an analysis of the data which has been given above in light of conclusions and

principles that anthropologists have postulated in other studies of culture contact.

First, in reference to the introduction of Christianity to the Meo, the missionary is an indirect factor. Nai Kheng, a Khmu, might be considered the innovator in that he was the carrier. However, more important is the fact that Po Si, a well-known shaman, became the first convert and in a very real sense was the innovator. It was Po Si who arranged for Nai Kheng to visit the Meo villages and accompanied him on these visits, giving personal testimony to the reality of his newly found faith and urging the Meo to give audience to this Khmu catechist. Following this pattern, in village after village, it has been the chiefs and shamans who have led their people in an acceptance of Christianity. This was given further support by Tubi, the Meo leader, and very active support by Sai Pao, the district chief. Though Po Si was the innovator in the first instance, one might say that there have been many innovators in different villages and districts, and nearly always a prominent person has been the initiator. Christianity has benefited from the prestige derived from these respected individuals. "With respect to prestige, the relation between the innovator and his innovations is a reciprocal one. The fact that he introduced it reflects some glory on him, but the new thing becomes associated with him in the minds of the group and gains or loses its potentialities for conferring prestige upon those who accept it later according to what his status may be."²

The acceptance of Christianity throughout the Meo population bears out Linton's further comment in this connection, that a new innovation will filter down in a culture from those of high status to those of a lower status, but seldom does it climb from a low status group to a high status group.³

A second factor which is very important in this study is the manner in which the innovation was introduced. Nai Kheng was himself a young convert. He

recounted only his faith in Christ, the procedure for attaining this faith, and finally could give in simple story form some of the episodes from the life of Christ. He knew little or nothing of ecclesiasticism. Therefore his message did what the missionary's usually does not. It dealt with matters which point more directly to Christian faith without the cultural trappings inherent in the missionary's presentation. It seems that Nai Kheng unwittingly established a pattern which the missionary followed and by which Christianity spread rapidly in Xieng Khouang. Emile Cailliet asserts, "...we should realize that no Christian approach to culture is safe which does not begin by disengaging Christian truth from the cultural forms, in which it has been embedded throughout the ages."⁴ Herskovits corroborates with this principle in the matter of technology: "Where the representatives of Euroamerican culture in contact with a native people are missionaries, relatively little change in native technology would be expected."⁵

A third factor in close relationship to the one just mentioned is related to the splendid relationship between the missionary and the national in the Xieng Khouang area. There was a marked hesitancy on the part of the missionaries to pressurize the Christians to abandon all their practices, since the former were not sure of the significance of the practices to the Meo themselves. If contact with Christianity resulted in some conflict with the Meo culture, it became apparent to the Meo himself and he struggled with the problem (see the three cases studied above).

The new objects...moral standards and religious beliefs must be introduced through native authority and acceptance, so that natives themselves can work out the consequent changes or cultural and social adjustments. They alone can do this, and it takes time, experience, and experiment.

Of course, this may seem frustrating to the efficient administrator or zealous missionary, but the

development of a people in culture has no meaning apart from their continuing as a people with an integrated social and cultural system. A people cannot be preserved by authority, and no people is willing to be "preserved." A people lives from within or dies without.⁶

It seems possible...to support the following generalization: people resist changes that threaten basic securities; they resist proposed changes they do not understand; they resist being forced to change.

Fortunately, the first strong action by the missionary in the destruction of the fetishes met with the approval of the Christians and the function of these items was substituted for through Christian practices, if nothing more than simple prayer. Thus there appeared to be little conflict within the culture as a result of taking away the fetishes and the shaman's ceasing from his practices. There is only one case known to me in which a village reverted to its powerful drum fetish. This village was located at the periphery of the Christian movement and perhaps had not received sufficient teaching and thereby as clear an understanding of Christian faith.

Some of the problems which are given above in three classifications have been greatly reduced or solved in very recent months.

Allocations and assignments of catechists are now made by the executive committee of the recently formed national church. Rites are now performed by Sali and licensed catechists. Baptism and communion are extended to those who are approved by local church committees in conference with the catechist responsible for the group. Delegation of authority to the catechists has resulted in the Christians' placing more confidence in them and going to them for counsel where they would probably have gone to the missionary.

The constitutional committee has been dissolved because of its "loaded" composition and because it involved a concept foreign to the tribespeople of Laos.

Mission funds are handled by the missionary and are generally used for mission expense, while church funds are handled and administered by the national church. Other measures in progress include a three-year program whereby a third of the subsidy to the catechists will be removed each year and shall be replaced by local church support. Thus by 1958 the church should be self-supporting.

Inflation has made the cutting of the subsidy difficult, but it has had its benefits. It has prevented the erection of a rather elaborate church in Xieng Khouang, although the structure will still not seem natural to the tribespeople. One questions whether they themselves would even have the technology for repairs.

Thus far, polygamy, the use of opium, and trial marriage have been considered difficult problems which will have to be handled within the society in time and as their faith takes on clearer manifestation within the framework of the Meo culture. I believe these problems can be worked out if the missionary does not insist on enforcing the attitudes of his own culture toward these items.

Bride-price, frowned upon by many missionaries, has not been considered evil by the missionaries in Xieng Khouang, since it is a cultural trait which gives a measure of solidarity to the Meo marriage. It functions as a proof of the young man's worth and his esteem for the girl. At the same time, it serves to discourage divorce, which would necessitate a financial adjustment. Bride-price to the Meo does not mean female slavery or a purchase of a piece of property. Hence it should be retained because of its function in giving stability to the family and thus to the culture.

Missionaries commonly refer to the concept of an "indigenous church" as though it were some magical formula consisting of three ingredients: self-support, self-government, and self-propagation.

In Xieng Khouang the self-propagation has developed naturally. Self-support was practically established during the Communist occupation but was partially undermined by the new mission subsidy. It is now being reintroduced with difficulty, by the three-year plan. The committee working on the constitution, three missionaries and two nationals, has been dissolved, but self-government is far from a reality. There needs to be a definite program put into action whereby the nationals will be given training in administration of church and school in order that they may be adequately prepared to take over an ever-increasing amount of the administrative responsibilities.

I had opportunity to observe missionary work in other parts of Laos, in Vietnam, and in Thailand. There are certain principles which I believe should be basic in missionary work. There is not space to draw comparisons from other areas, although such would be most helpful in giving more support to these principles. I have seen groups who have been Christian for twenty years but are not as rooted in local culture as the church in Xieng Khouang. Other groups are completely in operation without missionary supervision. Thus drawing on personal observation and the wealth of anthropological material available, I would make the following summary statement.

The missionary's goal should be: 1) to present Christianity apart from the implications of the missionary's own culture, since he recognizes the latter to be entirely relative and not essential to the establishment of a God-man relationship for the individual who is the recipient of Christian faith; 2) to not be satisfied

with the threefold standard traditionally used to indicate an indigenous church, but to be satisfied only as essential Christian faith takes root deep in the culture and the resulting Christian society makes outward manifestation and takes organizational form within the framework of the local culture; and 3) to become, thereby, dispensable to the continuance of the local church and yet be in such a place of rapport with the local church that he shall be welcomed as a guide and stimulus in the growth of the church.

To accomplish this the missionary must be convinced that the nationals--the Meo for sake of illustration--are not to become American church puppets but rather strong Christians although still Meo. He must be convinced that the Meo can be one hundred per cent Meo and still one hundred per cent Christian.⁸

I would propose that any culture, any society, and any member within a society may become Christian without losing distinctive characteristics.

The missionary introduces Christianity. Given time, its real essence will find its level in the depths of a culture, and when it has been accepted whole-heartedly on the level of basic values, acculturation will be possible and the necessary changes will be made from within. "A basic reformation of personality takes place in the acculturation process only when the people and values of the dominant culture are successfully attained."⁹

Efforts on the part of a missionary to bring about conformity to his denominational background or even traditional American concepts will bring about, at best, a superficial church which will fade away should the missionary leave and which will not be likely to grow or spread beyond the area which the missionary himself is able to reach.

Christianity, as an innovation in any culture, will cause changes, but when properly introduced and cultivated it will produce a Christian culture within the

configuration of the pre-existing culture without having caused a disintegration of that culture.

With my people, it is not so much what you say as how you say it, and who does the saying.

To my people, one "let us do" is worth more than a thousand "you must do's." Africa is a child, but our paternalists fail to observe that this child is growing. They also forget that in many instances it is more important to work with than to work for.¹⁰

The African clergyman and scholar who uttered those words re-echoes the thoughts of national Christians on most any mission field in the world.

Footnotes

1. Roux, Henri: "Quelques Minorities Ethniques du Nord-Indochine," France-Asie, No. 92-93, p. 388.

2. Linton, Ralph: Acculturation in Seven American Indian Tribes. D. Appleton Century Co., New York, 1940. p. 473.

3. Ibid., p. 474.

4. Cailliet, Emile: The Christian Approach to Culture. D. Appleton Century Co., New York, 1940. p. 15.

5. Herskovits, Melville J.: Man and His Works. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1951. p. 530.

6. Elkin, A. P.: Social Anthropology in Melanesia. Oxford University Press, London, 1953. p. 148.

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TASTE IN CHRISTIAN MUSIC

Douglas Feaver

[It is not only the anthropologist who learns from a cross-cultural situation. Many an individual has understood his own customs better by seeing the contrast of another way of life. Dr. Feaver is an instructor in classics at Yale and a musician on the side. His article¹ was not originally written with the readers of Practical Anthropology in mind, but its implications for us, and its applications to the problems of Christian music in non-Western societies are obvious.--Ed.]

It was Christmas Eve, and more thrilling, it was Christmas Eve in the Holy Land itself. The journey by taxi through the wilderness night became a symbolical pilgrimage: the stars shone so clearly that they illumined faintly even the inky valleys of Judea with a blue light and seemed a myriad of witnesses to the Star of Bethlehem.

A program of Christmas hymns and carols from Jerusalem poured out of the radio, as if expressly designed to capture our exalted mood. The conclusion was a magnificent performance of the Christmas section of Handel's Messiah, done in traditional English opulence. It was a fine demonstration of the power of music to sum up and express not only the meaning, but also the emotional and spiritual context of the situation.

Then suddenly, savagely, the ecstasy was shattered by a blast of Arabic music from the following program. The harsh timbres, the monotonous primitive harmonies, the foreign intervals so out of tune to my ears, made that music seem to me as much the product of hell as the sublime cadences of "For Unto Us a Child is Born" had seemed the inevitable language of heaven. But as I sat there, like Jonah cursing the gourd, resenting the destruction of my bliss, an unwelcome thought suddenly came to my mind...If the first "Gloria in Excelsis" had

been sung by the angels, and sung in an idiom intelligible to the Bethlehem shepherds, would it not have sounded more like this Arabic music than like Handel? If the redeemed in heaven perform on kitharas (mistranslated "harps"), will they use the queer-sounding kithara scales that my researches into ancient music had uncovered? Thus I was led to wonder just what "heavenly music" would be like. What kind of music would God approve of? What musical idiom is "right" for Christian music?

But first of all, what is an idiom? Idioms are the dialects of musical language, varying from individual to individual, social group to social group, and nation to nation, but reflecting the culture of a particular group of people. This may be artificially obtained by intensive training or casually absorbed as an unconscious function of living. But no single dialect, whether language or music, can have any special status with God.

It does not follow, on the other hand, that there are no standards of value which apply to the problem of idiom. I do believe that God is vitally concerned about the musical or verbal dialect in which praise to Him is couched; but we must be sure that we find His standard of evaluation, not ours. As we attempt, then, to find out what Scriptural standards would be, it is first necessary to clarify in our minds just what, in a Christian context, a hymn is supposed to accomplish.

Why Not Prose?

Why do we express an idea in poetry--especially when, on the surface, it might be more fully expressed in prose? Why do we subject that idea to the stringencies of meter and rhyme, so arbitrary and restrictive? Why do we take the poem that has resulted and further force it into the still more arbitrary patterns of pitch and rhythm which we call music? Why not at all times speak in natural, honest prose, with the pitch and time inflections of simple speech? This is a profound problem and any answer will of necessity be an oversimplification.

From some points of view we could avoid the question and say simply that we are just so made that we like it. But this answer seems to reduce music in a Christian context to the function of personal gratification (which just about describes its sole raison d'etre for most people). As long as it pleases and entertains, Christians are satisfied. Of course it does not necessarily follow that because something pleases us it is also pleasing to God. Yet this fallacy is the principle on which most people signify their approval or disapproval of Christian music, whether they are high-, middle-, or low-brows. We say, "I enjoyed it; therefore it is good music."

Let us turn from the question of the pleasure music and poetry give us (irrelevant to our purpose), and consider the subject, divided for convenience into two concepts: first, "expression" or "meaning"; and second, "communication" or "intelligibility."

The inner core of human personality is never fully articulate. Everyone is conscious that language expresses one's complete meaning only imperfectly, and communicates that meaning even more imperfectly. But there are other vehicles of expression, each of which is more efficient in conveying certain aspects of the whole logos. They may be used separately, as in instrumental music, or combined. Thus, in a hymn we have a threefold expression of a logos: a prose expression, a poetic expression and a musical expression. Together they present, as it were, a three-dimensional portrait of the idea expressed. Other vehicles and dimensions are possible. Plastic arts, dramatic arts and the dance are in their own way vehicles of expression. The latter two have a rather uncertain status in our contemporary religious milieu, the dance in particular having been confined to the so-called "action choruses" which so many children and childish adults enjoy. But the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that it is possible to express valid religious truth even by the dance.

What Poetry and Music Adds

But to return to the poem with its musical setting, what are these added ideas that poetic and musical expression convey? A poem is a construct of words which, by its structure, is an illumination and exposition of the emotional and symbolical relationships which lie behind and around the simple "prose truth." In Scriptural terms the poem is an expression of the "heart" in distinction to the "mind." Even doggerel verse says something more than plain prose: the sad but fictional tale of the demise of the gawky daughter of an unidentified miner would not hold our attention for a minute, were it not made memorable by the doggerel verse and the simple melody of "Clementine." Verse makes things memorable. But this is the lowest function of poetry. Of more importance, poetry makes an idea "sensible", that is, not merely "reasonable", but also "feelable." For instance, consider the following familiar lines:

"Jesu, lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
And the tempest still is high."

This says something more than, "Jesus, Thou who lovest me, allow me to come close to Thee, especially since I am in the midst of great troubles"--which is the prose truth of the passage. Even the use of the sounds is important: the Latinized vocative ("Jesu"), which avoids a final "s", conveys an insight into the feeling of the line; the four "r" sounds in the third line and the clash of the two "st" sounds in the fourth provide an aural support for the imagery of the lines. As we sing this we should enunciate these sounds clearly, not to be the slaves of punctuation, but to express the full meaning. Then too, the imagery of the frightened child, the menacing storm, the sea, and the congruency of this picture are a valuable addition to the expression of the prose truth.

To the poetic truth the music adds another dimension of nonverbal connotations. It expresses and illumines the mood, spirit and attitude relative to both prose truth and poetic truth. For example, if we sing the tune Abersytwyth with the above lines we find that the minor key, the roll of the melodic line, the emotional excitements and climaxes are all congruent with the imagery and ideas of the text, and add to them. In a sense, prose is a function of the reason, poetry of the emotion and music of the volition; though all, of course, participate in all.

Truthful Expression

The prose expression must first of all be truthful, an accurate reflection of divine revelation; it must be Scripturally and doctrinally sound. The mere stringing together of ideas and verbal clichés, true in themselves but unrelated logically or poetically with one another, is a form of untruth. The text of such a piece as "On the Jericho Road", to say nothing of the flippant attitude of its melodic line and dance rhythm, is untrue because it is meaningless.

Furthermore, in a manner often overlooked, the added emotional connotative values added by the poetic construct must also be truthful. For example, an exposition of the death of Christ would be poetically "untrue" if cast, say, in a limerick whose structure conveys a mood of irreverence inimical to solemn truth. The imagery, too, must be truthful. In the song described above the image of the road to (or from?) Jericho means exactly nothing. Similarly, the musical expression must be truthful, conveying the spirit or attitude which is truly appropriate to the ideas expressed in the light of God's truth and His attitude to them. Let us take as an example the hymn "There is a Fountain Filled with Blood." The text is awesome imagery indeed; in fact, if handled inappropriately, it is repulsive. Yet we need not deny ourselves the stark power of so elemental a symbol. But the tune commonly used, an excellent one in

its idiom, and deservedly popular for its solid structure, is musically untrue for this text. By itself the music expresses elation and lightheartedness, and would be suitable for a text of congruent sentiments. With this text it detracts from the true implication of the message, and tends to vulgarize it.

Sincere Expression

The second principle relating to the expressive aspect of music is that of sincerity. Not only must the message be true from the points of view we have discussed, but it must be true for the singer. Thanks from thankless hearts, praise from rebellious minds and consecration from unsundered wills...perhaps it is no wonder that we never ask whether God was pleased with the music of the evening!

Hymns are not merely expressive, however; they are also vehicles of communication. Perfect expression may not be perfect communication. A certain Greek poem may seem to me a brilliant expression of a particular vision of reality, but it will mean nothing to my four-year-old boy. Likewise many great works of music are magnificent expressions of spiritual truth, but they communicate only to those who have some acquaintance with the idiom in which they are expressed.

Hymns that are addressed to God as worship, thanksgiving or prayer do not present problems in communication. As long as they are truthfully expressive, the only principle which applies is that they must represent the best of which we are capable. When we praise God together, however, it must be done in a language understood by all present, as Paul points out in the fourteenth chapter of First Corinthians. Those who wish to praise God in an "unknown tongue" are to do so privately.

St. Paul is not speaking loosely when he implies a parallel between prayer and music in this chapter; both

are to be performed "in the spirit" and "with the understanding." In corporate activity the aim is "edification" of the congregation. As St. Paul says in Colossians, this is the consequence of the Word dwelling in us richly, and is a form of "speaking to" and "admonishing" through "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." As the whole passage in the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians makes clear, the aim of this communication must be intelligibility. Our choice, then, of a musical idiom will depend on the musical dialect which is understood by our intended audience. It must neither be too far above them nor beneath them, the latter being a point which is particularly important when music is planned in a university context. But even within the confines of an idiom the further principle of decency and order is to be considered. We must consider the effect on outsiders who will be repelled by any sign of unseemliness or disorder. We must sing "in the spirit," that is, from the heart and by the Holy Spirit; and "with the mind," that is, intelligently and intelligibly.

How will these principles work out in practice? As musicians and leaders of meetings we will choose hymns which best express in every dimension the truth that is appropriate for the occasion. As accompanists, we will recognize that our task is not to "pep up" the music, nor to display our technique, but to lead the congregation with all the technical resources at our command in a thoughtful and fully expressive exposition of the words, imagery and music of the hymns. As singers in the audience we will consider carefully the implications of every aspect of the message we are singing, learning its truth, applying it to our own experience, expressing it with every device that poet and musician have provided for us, sensitive to every nuance of feeling implied, careful to make our meaning clear to those to whom the message is addressed.

Footnote

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PRACTICAL PROBLEMS

[The problem which follows is presented with a request for anonymity. It is a problem, however, which many missionaries all over the world have puzzled about. Dr. Nida gives one answer. What do other readers think?]

"Should We Attend Indian Ceremonials?"

I have read with deep interest your recent book, Customs and Cultures. Such a study with its psychological implications to those engaged in mission work has been long overdue.

Coming to the mission field five years ago I was shocked to find standard works of anthropology and the authors themselves held in such disrepute among missionaries. This was the more regrettable among culture groups such as the Navahos and Hopis, who are only partially assimilated, and still cling tenaciously to many of their more primitive patterns of living.

May I presume to ask you several questions in the light of your wide experience with people of many cultures? They are questions that a group of us are giving serious and rather searching thought to.

Eight years ago, under a former administration, all members of the mission staff were forbidden to attend any Indian ceremonials. Failure to comply with this regulation would have resulted in dismissal from one's job. Presumably this policy was based on the reasoning of the lay Navaho evangelists that it was a serious hindrance to them in their work of winning Navahos to the Christian way of life.

A new administration coming in seven years ago adopted a more liberal policy toward this matter, advising staff members to attend with discretion, because such experiences were necessary for a fuller understanding of the native cultures and essential for competency

in their jobs. Certain staff members became close friends of Hopi elders, who took them to Hopi kiva ceremonies, which few white people ever have the opportunity to see, in an atmosphere of mutual respect and religious tolerance.

The questions are these: which type of situation, the first or the second, is more conducive to winning people of a primitive group to the Christian way of life? Does the first policy represent a form of religious intolerance which might carry with it overtones of racial intolerance as well, which might offset the presumed gains to the native missionaries? Our native lay missionaries decided some three years ago that any form of folk games and dancing by our students constituted an impediment to their work in winning Navahos to the Christian way of life. This stand was overruled by the staff at large. Could these stands by native evangelists have been forms of rationalization or justification that the new Christian makes whenever his task is particularly difficult and the cards seem stacked in the culture against his sincerest efforts?

Working Out a Cooperative Answer

It seems to me you are obliged to reckon with the fact that it is impossible to enter the Navaho situation as though it were completely untouched by Christian missionary attitudes. If no Protestant missionaries had been in the area up to the present time, it would be a much simpler matter to deal with some of the problems of acculturation. However, missionaries have been there for a number of years, and missionaries in the past were certainly very reluctant to identify themselves in any way with indigenous practices. This sets the standard for early Navaho Christians, and this type of standard would be interpreted by Navahos as being the true brand of Christianity.

I have noted in talking with some Navahos on the field that they are very strongly attached, both

emotionally and psychologically, to early missionary leaders. These pioneers did endear themselves to many people, and because of the traditional outlook of Navaho culture as a whole, there is a compounded emphasis upon the past. This leads people to have greater respect for past values and attitudes, and also produces a kind of skepticism with regard to the future, or new ideas and attitudes. This ties into the tensions which tend to exist between those of liberal and conservative theological orientation, for those who are conservative would tend to criticize any new developments, especially those which might involve participation in Indian ceremonials, or dances. Accordingly, as I am sure you have already realized, the problem is made much more acute by the tensions which exist within our own culture as Americans, and which are imposed upon the Navaho culture as a kind of value system, essentially unrelated in a sense to their culture, but one which is reinterpreted in terms of contrasts within Navaho culture itself.

Most indigenous cultures in the United States show a considerable tendency to syncretism. Accordingly, it is fully understandable how the Navaho evangelist would regard actions on the part of missionaries which would seem to compromise their message of Christianity as a totally different religion from that which the Navahos themselves possess. This complete "otherness" which early missionaries taught, and which Navahos have tended to feel as members of one culture which has seemed so different to them from the one which they are proclaiming, can explain the reactions of Navaho evangelists to the attitude of American missionaries, and is a source of some of the most severe misunderstandings that can possibly arise.

It seems to me that the only solution to a situation such as this which has arisen through the years, and which has obviously never been resolved to the complete satisfaction of all concerned, is to work out in consultation with Navaho staff and missionaries some practical solution to the problem of mutual understanding. It

does not seem to me that any adequate solution can be reached by what would appear to be unilateral action on the part of the missionary constituency. I think that one of the most important aspects of this problem is that not only do missionaries need to understand Navaho people, but the Navahos are just as much in need of understanding missionary attitudes. This tendency on the part of some missionaries to probe into indigenous cultures in order to "understand" them can be a subtle form of paternalism, despite the fact that its motivations are certainly not overtly recognized.

I would say that what is needed is a thorough study of this problem in terms of its historical and cultural perspectives--a study which would be made by both Navahos and the missionary staff in exchange of impressions, viewpoints, and attitudes. In this way the Navaho members of the staff might come to more fully appreciate the isolation which the American missionary feels, and at the same time he might be able to communicate to the American missionary some of these very fine points of distinction, which are so evident to people within their own culture, but which seem to be so utterly incomprehensible to people who come into the culture from the outside.

One of the special difficulties in this kind of a situation is an attempt to treat the attendance of ceremonies and folk dances as isolated situations. In general, people do think of them as problems in and of themselves, but actually, people's judgment with regard to such matters are compounded out of a very complex response to the total culture of the people. Accordingly, this makes the situation much more difficult, and since people are usually unable to define clearly why they feel the way they do, both parties tend to regard the other's reason as being inadequate, and nothing more than ill-founded prejudice. Actually, I believe you will find that these particular issues are nothing more than the focus of a whole complex of cultural attitudes

and behavior patterns, all of which need to be understood if one is going to have an adequate answer to this problem of ceremonies and dances.

It would seem to me that one of the best solutions would be to find, if possible, an anthropologist of sympathetic attitude who might be able to guide discussions and who, over a period of time, might be able to assist in the process of mutual understanding and education. I am sure that if this type of problem is not resolved it would only result in widening the breach within the mission, and would also likely provide a basis for the infiltration of groups and persons whose traditional views would seem to be more satisfactory to the Navaho mind. Hence, it would be very easy for such a person to soon obtain the loyal support and backing of what constituency the mission might now have, at least among the older Christians.

It might be, of course, that the younger Christians would go along with this new attitude quite enthusiastically, but the tragedy with this approach would be a rupture between the past and the present, and this break in continuity would probably be far worse than any problem which it might ultimately resolve.

I am afraid that my letter, instead of helping to resolve some of your complex situations, may seem to be adding rather than subtracting difficulties. However, I think that the situation may be far more complex than it seems to be on the surface, or, at least, that any adequate solution is likely to require far more extensive study and re-evaluation than may have appeared necessary at the beginning.

Eugene A. Nida

EDITORIAL REMARKS

Religion and Anthropology

In the discussions of religion by anthropologists and missionaries it is often possible to note a degree of "skewing" produced by one's personal or professional outlook.

Most anthropologists, in describing a more or less homogeneous culture, take the position of trying to defend the underdog. No doubt this is primarily a reaction to the undue criticism heaped upon the "heathen" by uninformed evangelists, naive evolutionists, and the average ethnocentric traveler. In general, anthropologists emphasize the stabilizing, integrating force of religion, and how the indigenous beliefs make for adjustment to the "supernatural," reinforce the social structure, and provide ennobling motivation for the esthetic expression of man. This is, of course, often quite true. But whereas most anthropologists seem only too ready to point out the weaknesses in a people's material adjustments to physical environment, and to indicate the fundamentally antagonistic patterns in their social structure (often leading to constant conflicts in the in-group as well as the out-group relationships), some seem singularly hesitant about making a critical analysis of the religious life of the people.

Anthropologists do, however, treat in considerable detail the so-called "breakdown of religion," especially in instances in which competing religious systems (often the indigenous practices in competition with the missionaries' importation) produce "disruption and disintegration" of the earlier patterns of life. Such changes are generally regarded as essentially bad.

No missionary with anthropological background and much field experience will deny the fact that some missionary efforts have been far more disruptive than constructive. On the other hand, the very purpose of Christian missions is to be disruptive, in the sense

that the proclamation of the Gospel "turns the world upside down," even as Paul's detractors accused him of doing. We fully recognize both the extent and the dangers of this disruptive process--perhaps even more than some of our critics--but as both Christians and anthropologists we are also keenly aware that all religions are not alike. In the same way that people may have adopted poorly devised means of meeting their physical and social needs, they also possess religious systems which are fundamentally inimical to their own best interests--whatever the standard of judgment may be. Rather than attempt to justify religious practice, why not face the fact that certain types of religious beliefs and behavior result in caste distinctions, create a nonproductive parasitic priestly class, encourage haughtiness and pride, ruin the economic life by making unwarranted demands upon the people's income, stimulate sadism, reward the neurotic, draw attention to the grossly physical, and make a society fearful, suspicious, and morose.

The Good News can, however, so penetrate a society as to result in a drastic change, at least for a considerable segment. Of course, a movement such as has occurred among the Tzeltals of southern Mexico (in which Miss Marianna Slocum of the Wycliffe Bible Translators has had a leading part) has not been without some disruptive aspects, but for several thousands of people it has meant the release from fear of black magic, the reconciliation of friends, the reestablishment of family relations, and the integration of previously divided communities.

I am not, however, trying to defend or to criticize missionary activity, but I do believe we should bring to analyses of various religions the same type of rigorous objectivity which is claimed for other realms of inquiry. Such an attitude would not only make the anthropologists' studies more accurate and penetrating, but would also keep missionaries from wholesale condemnation of everything foreign. We must overcome our "skewing" of the data, or we cannot long escape the judgment of being downright prejudiced.

Eugene A. Nida

NOTES AND NEWS

Neanderthal Man Achieves Completely Erect Posture

Section H (Anthropology) of the American Association for the Advancement of Science commemorated "The 100th Anniversary of the Discovery of Neanderthal Man" by a symposium presented at the 123rd annual meeting of the Association on December 27, 1956 in New York City. The following report of the meeting is given by James O. Buswell, III.

Papers were presented by well-chosen leaders in the field of human paleontology. Loren C. Easley of the University of Pennsylvania began with an excellent historical orientation, "Neanderthal Man and the Dawn of Human Paleontology." The material culture associated with Neanderthals was the subject of Hallam L. Movius, Jr., of Harvard University.

With unusual breadth and brilliance for his years, F. Clark Howell of the University of Chicago discussed the ticklish problem of the Neanderthaloids of Southwestern Asia and their relationship to the classic types of Western Europe.

"Some Observations on the Pathology of Neanderthal Man" was presented by William L. Strauss, Jr., of Johns Hopkins University. The session was concluded by a brief discussion of the significance of alleged "American Neanderthaloids" by T. Dale Stewart of the U.S. National Museum in Washington.

Of the most significance was Professor Straus' presentation of the results of recent re-examination of the remains of the famous "old man of La Chapelle-Aux-Saints." It was upon the reconstruction of these remains that Boule, in 1911-13, based his long famous picture of the Neanderthal posture; stooped, head thrust forward, knees bent, and stupid expression included. No

cervical curvature and very slight, if any, lumbar curvature of the spinal column was long believed to be the chief explanation for the reconstruction.

Straus reported, however, that there was abundant evidence of advanced osteo-arthritis in the La Chapelle mandible and throughout the post-cranial skeleton. The vertebrae not only reveal marked "lipping" and deformation, but indicate, as well, significantly faulty repair on the part of the early investigators. It was pointed out that recently Aramburg and Schultz have seriously questioned the "naturalness of semi-erect posture in an habitually bi-pedal stance." Furthermore, Aramburg has shown that modern man has frequently the same form of vertebrae as La Chapelle, proving that it was not a simian feature as Boule had thought. Professor Straus concluded by stating that "there is nothing about Neanderthal man that would necessarily cause him to walk any differently than ourselves."

Summer Linguistic Institutes

The Toronto Institute of Linguistics will be held this year from May 31 to June 28 at the Toronto Bible College. The purpose of the Institute is "to introduce the prospective missionary to applied linguistics, training him in some of the skills essential to the learning of a foreign language, and giving him some awareness of the cultural situation in which peoples speak and live."

At Allegheny College in Meadville, Pennsylvania, the Personnel Committee of the International Missionary Council will have the linguistic portion of its outgoing missionary conference from July 5-25. The purpose of this session is to give the outgoing missionary a measure of linguistic orientation and some language-learning skills.

The Summer Institute of Linguistics will have sessions at two U.S. universities. The courses will be

held at the University of North Dakota from June 24 to September 6 and at the University of Oklahoma from June 17 to August 30. The Summer Institute of Linguistics is designed to prepare missionaries in the fundamental principles of language reduction and Bible translation.

The Summer Institute of Linguistics also conducts a summer session at Caronport, Sask., Canada.

From the Business Manager's Desk

As business manager of Practical Anthropology, I have had perhaps the best opportunity to watch the magazine grow in its outreach to people all over the world. In the last issue it was mentioned that we had over 350 subscribers, one hundred of whom were added in the past year. However, in less than three months, another hundred have been added, so that there are now approximately 470. Yet because we believe PA can have a real ministry in the effective communication of the Gospel, we would like to see its outreach expand even more. In order to further this, funds have been provided to print extra copies for distribution as samples.

To be as efficient as possible, we would like to send the sample copies primarily to those persons who we think might really be interested. This is where you, our regular subscribers, come in. Many of you have already helped by loaning (and in some cases giving) your prized copies of PA to others. It is your friends, who are concerned about the same things you are, that would most likely profit from a subscription to PA. Would you take the time right now to jot down on the enclosed slip a few names and addresses of such persons whom you know? We will be happy to send them a sample issue along with a letter. This is your opportunity to play a small yet specific part in the ministry of Practical Anthropology.

M.H.T.

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